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synopsis

In the heart of the forest, the ruthless dictator Wolfstar seizes control of all Clans, imprisoning many cats under his rule. Among the captives is a brave young kit named Violetkit. Amidst her imprisonment, Violetkit encounters Stormpaw, Wolfstar's son, who

is troubled by his father's tyranny.

Moved by Violetkit's spirit, Stormpaw decides he can no longer support his father's cruel regime. Together, they escape the clutches of Wolfstar and embark on a perilous journey through the forest. As they traverse dangerous territories and forge an unlikely friendship, they search for the elusive Rebellion Clan, a group of cats rumored to be fighting against Wolfstar's reign.

Their quest is filled with challenges and discoveries, teaching them the true values of courage, loyalty, and hope. Along the way, Violetkit and Stormpaw become symbols of resistance, inspiring other cats to stand up against the dictatorship. Their journey not only aims to find the Rebellion Clan but also to spark a revolution that could change the fate of the forest forever.

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caution: please be aware there are mature themes in this book. Such as violence, blood & gore, mention of death, and mild language. If any of these mentioned topics may offend you, it's possible this book isn't for you.

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credits: warrior cats rightfully belong to Erin Hunter but all original characters belong to me. All the lovely graphics contained throughout the chapters in this book are mentioned before the writing.

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awards: first place winner of The Lorelai Awards hosted by The_Lorelai_Awards

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status:

started | 2-13-19

finished | 6-28-19

0 | allegiances

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[WOLFCLAN]

'come inside? Let the fire burn you alive.'

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

i n f o:

~tryannical

~occupy the old ShadowClan territory

~use fire as a weapon

~prey includes frogs, squirrels, voles, and crows

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

r o l e s:

~ leader = one cat; in complete control

~lieutenant = two cats; assist the leader and keep peace

~protectors = ONLY toms who fight battles, secure borders, and guard prisoners

~queens = NOT pregnant she-cats. only responsibility is to hunt- will fight if needed

~prisoners = kidnapped cats from conquered clans.

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

LEADER

wolfstar | a brawny dark gray tabby tom with fierce amber eyes

LIEUTENANTS

eagleblaze | a fiery ginger tabby tom with brown eyes

kestrelbreeze | a slim black tom with green eyes

PROTECTORS

molesnake | a bronze-toned tom with pale yellow eyes

stormrunner | a dark gray tom, missing left eye, one blue eye; father - wolfstar

owlfeather | a white tom with shiny amber eyes

breezescar | a charcoal-toned tom with blue eyes

duskmoon | a cream-coloured tom; twin-dawnsun

dawnsun | a cream colored tom

rowanflame | a dark brown tabby tom with white underbelly

snakefang | a sly, black tom

sparrowchaser | a lithe pale ginger tom

tigerhowl | a muscular pale gray tom with green eyes

crimsonflood | an unusual brown tom with one blue eye, one brown

aldershade | a dark ginger tom with amber eyes

fallowsplash | a ginger and white tom with blue eyes

buzzardflight | a young snowy-colored tom with icy blue eyes

pinestone | a brittle gray tom

mudmask | a dark brown tom with a lighter brown face

ravencry | a tuxedo tom with leaf green eyes

QUEENS

sweetsong | a stunning siamese she-cat

dovetail | a pale gray she-cat with a white tail tip

cindermist | an elder gray she-cat with fierce green eyes

silverrose | a sleek black she-cat with amber-red eyes

sunweb | a brown and white patched she-cat

tawnydapple | a calico she-cat with friendly green eyes

briareye | a kind brown she-cat with one blind eye

ivyclaw | a thin golden she-cat

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[image]

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

[THE REBELLION]

'the resistance is here.'

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

i n f o:

~occupy WindClan territory

~have been destroyed; only few members

~just a group of rebels

~prey includes rabbits and sometimes squirrels

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

r o l e s:

~leaders = a group of cats who vote and make decisions

~warriors = toms and she-cats who hunt, do border patrols and are willing to fight

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

unknown ~

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divider

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i | nothing but ash

[image]

wolfstar made by milkyfluer

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Chaos hung in the midnight air like a heavy fog. It was unmistakably present and impossible to see through. It hazed over the forest and there was nothing to extinguish it with. The chaos was suffocating- no one would survive.

He thrived in the chaos. His bones and his blood fed off of cats' turmoil. It was a sensation he had loved since he was young: power, chaos. He was giving back his pain to the forest, to everyone who had wronged him. *RiverClan.*

The Clan cats had suspected the usual, easy night to arrive. When StarClan would stretch its wings across the heavens and speckle hope throughout darkness. But the night had taken a sudden, dangerous change.

A thrilling blaze scaled into a ring around the RiverClan campground. It was a blinding, ocherous gleam which clawed its hands towards StarClan. The flames rose higher and higher; screeching and sizzling in pain.

At first, the Clan had figured it was mother nature's wrath. That the world had warmed up and they were the ones to blame.

He strode through the flames, unafraid to get his tail seared. With a smile scarred upon his face like smoky stars, he marched through the madness. A patrol followed every step of his paw; molding with his shadow to create a monstrous veil. As they entered, the ring of fire seemed to bend around their shadow figures, bowing to them. A miracle, it was.

A breathtaking sensation of hope swelled up inside of the RiverClan cats as they assumed their allies were here to save them from the fire.*They were mistaken.*

As he drew near the cowering Clan, he recongized helpless faces among the soot and ashes. He smiled; feeling content inside. The leader halted at once and his gathering stopped behind him. He cleared his throat, "RiverClan," His dazzling eyes scanned over the begrimed cats. "What a tragedy."

"W-Wolfstar," A deep mew spoke from the crowd of cats. RiverClan's leader, Sagestar, stepped forward with a head angeled towards the earth. "I'm so glad you could assist my Clan during this unexpected diaster." The old tomcat stammered uneasily.

"*Oh, no*." Wolfstar, the harsh leader of ThunderClan, cooed. His radiant eyes impersonated the fire; dancing recklessly within his head. "I'm not here to help you."

Sagestar's head snapped upwards, making contact with Wolfstar's. He frowned and his shivered legs buckled back. "What?" He glanced his Clan, then at Wolfstar again.

Wolfstar's smile faded quicker than the flash of light. He sprung forward bombastically so his face was inches away from Sagestar's. "I started the fire, you fool!" Spit sizzled from his tongue and landed upon the shorter leader's head. Beneath the wild crackling of flames, the tension between the old friends was deafening.

"I-I don't understand. Is this an attack?"

Wolfstar paused. The thought of his enemies having a painful defeat was like a sweet treat to his inner pysche. He had been planning this day; tracking down the right moment, training the troops, gathering the supplies. And now he had it within a simple grasp of his claws. He wouldn't let it go so easily.

"Yes, I'm here to kill you." Wolfstar commanded. He twisted back to his hundreds of warriors, "Secure the borders, capture every warrior possible, kill the resistent ones." He barked like a dog, his cruel words hardening the air around the cats.

"Go!" His Clan sprung in each and every direction, igniting chaos. In a matter of seconds, the Clans clashed into unruly strife: silvers claws glinted under the clouded moon, towering flames blocked RiverClan from escape, and dying screeches sung to the heavens.

"Don't think you're going to get away so easily, Wolfstar." Sagestar spoke out and his body flexed into a fearless eloquence. His dusky fur rippled in the hot breeze of smoke and embers and he refused to take away his eyes. "WindClan will arrive to help- your sister-"

"She means nothing to me-" He growled, his lashing tail back and forth as he eyed his prey. "I'm here for you."

Sagestar's confident expression shattered into an unsettled one. With so much age aching on his shoulders, it was hard to remain strong. His Clan had surely been caught by surprise. All he could do was fight. "Please," He coughed, "Search for mercy in your heart before you destroy me."

Wolfstar's dagger-like claws slid from their sockets. He growled menacingly, "There is no mercy."

Evil, similar to darkness leaking into a pale room, had infected his heart. It was seeping slowly and painfull into an innocent body, altering their heart and their mind. Turning back was no option now: the damage had been done. Wolfstar vaulted into warfare with a tom who was once his friend.

Now, there was nothing left but ashes.

Herculean flames raged against a peaceful midnight setting. Smoke trickled into the dens like gentle streams, drowning innocent cats in ashes. Loud gags and coughs could be heard amid the battle cries; everyone was dying in some way. Chaos was a sharp red upon a blank canvas: shocking and unexpected.

A slim, dark figure slipped from one of the smoky dens. Her fur was plastered along her back calmly, she knew now was no time to panic. She stepped gracefully to the edges of the RiverClan campsite, using the shadows of the trees in her favor. A young kitten bounced at her side, her remarkably-colored eyes piercing

holes through the dense smoke.

"Mama, I'm scared." The kit whimpered, quaking beside her mother's paws.

"It's time to be brave, young Violetkit." The black queen continued to nudge her kit forward as they grew separated from the Clan. "Every noble warrior has once been scared but you must live through your fear." Suddenly, her eyes descended upon a shadowed figure approaching them. The mother knew it was not one of their own.

"Violetkit, listen to me." She spoke quietly but hastily, time was slipping like sand to the bottom of a lake. "You need to go on-"

"I can't!" The silver kit complained.

"Yes, you can. You must." The mother stroked her kitten's head. "Listen, you need to run straight, follow this river down, and don't stop until you see open moors and big purple flowers. Do you understand?" The mother addressed firmly, noticing the figure was coming closer and closer by the second. "Go now, Violetkiy. I'll be right behind you."

With a discouarged smile smeared across her face, Violetkit bounced away. Confusion submerged her mind like cold water, she didn't understand the sudden uproar. After a few steps in, she glanced over her shoulder to see her mother.

The long-legged queen was standing still, a compassionate smile caught on her lips. She nodded softly, urging her kit forward.

As the two were caught in the daze, the unknown warrior sprung onto the mother. Violetkit shrieked in horror as she bore witness to her mother's attack. "Mama!" The feline was mauled by the muscular fighter; there was no chance. Rose-colored ooze leaked out from the queen's head as she slumped lifelessly to the ground.

Violetkit's heart tripped in her chest as her mother's beautiful eyes shifted to glass. "Mama!" She wailed, "Please get up!" Her cries were useless. Her beloved queen was gone; melted away like the

peacefulnes of that night.

The muscular attacker licked his lips, clearing the crimson paste from his chin. His striking eyes then leveled with Violetkit's and struck through her soul.

The silver kit *gasped* and swung on her heel. She tore down the crooked pathway, her heart racing within her tiny chest. *It was too late.*

Cutting teeth penetrated her scruff. Before Violetkit could comprehend, her paws began to hover from the ground. She wriggled in an attempt to escape but the warrior's grip was stern. She couldn't manuever herself away, all she could do was give up.

A dark emotion swirled through her bones and into her bloodstream as she has carried over the ashen covered battlefield. *Defeat? Regret?* Whatever the feeling was, Violetkit knew there was no turning back. Her future was ruptured and dark. Who knew where these strange warriors were taking her. All Violetkit could hope for was that she would live to see the sun tomorrow.

Little did she know, she would see a lot more than that.

ii | green-eyed

[image]

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Anger surged like a storm within his bloodstream. He clenched his jaw furiously, staring the one he once loved most dead in the eye. "You're a damn fool." He scoffed as his ears flattened menacingly along his head.

"I can't believe I ever loved you." The dark-toned she-cat pronounced sadly. Her eyes shimmered with indefinable oppression. It smoldered like a fire within her soul, holding her heart captive in frozen shackles. "I command you free them. I did not vow my devotion to a ruthless monster." She sensed hot tears springing in her eyes.

The brawny tom began to laugh senselessly. His spiked teeth glinted in the obscure air. His dashing amber eyes penetrated a typhoon of terror throughout her body. The she-cat couldn't comprehend what her soulmate had stirred into. He was not frightened by a storm anymore, why, he was the storm. In an instant, his claws lurched towards the she-cat's leg and he grasped her harshly. "Oh StarClan, feel this pulse!" The aggressive tom howled. "Why you're trembling out of your own fur. Why so scared, darlin'?" The mimicking words swirled off his sharp tongue.

The striped she-cat jerked her leg aside from the tom's clutch. Her whiskers quivered as she gazed at the leader coldly. "I'm not afraid of you." She spoke recklessly.

"You should be-"

"I'm leaving." The inky-haired molly intervened the leader's daunting. "And I'm bringing our son with me!" She whisked around, her tail gashing against the tom's face. Her claws slipped out of their sockets, attentive to shield herself.

The amber-eyed tom vaulted in front of the exit. He barred the she-cat from leaving. "You're not going anywhere." He snapped. "It is physically impossible to bequeath WolfClan now. We are a battery of strength and union and no cat will forsake us." A sly smirk skidded along his scarred face.

The tom continued, perceiving his lover's fear. "WolfClan is rising by the second. RiverClan, gone. ShadowClan, overlooked. And ThunderClan is no more." He noticed his she-cat had slackened. Her once passionate eyes were now hushed with ease. "The power is all ours. And it's right in front of our whiskers. Our son will soon, one day, be in management of all of this ascendency. Don't you want that for him? For us?" The gray tom's voice softened as he manipulated his mate. He tended her closer, her muzzle now leaning along his muscular shoulders. Exploitation was a compelling key the chief had mastered and he grinned devilishly to himself as his mate agreed to stay.

"Now," He thrust the twitching she-cat off of him. "Why don't you be away with yourself? I have prisoner's bones to be crushing." The muscular tom dissolved into the darkness of the night, only his yellowish eyes appearant in the obscurity.

□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Violetkit trembled as the screams of dying cats operated on repeat in her mind. Blood stitched the swollen air; both components producing a perfect masterpiece. The young kit hid beneath her stale moss bed. Unfamiliar optics contemplated at her intently. Chilling shivers rippled along her spine. Her mother was *deceased* and she was terrorized by the harsh surroundings.

Another shriek *pierced* the midnight atmosphere. A rumble of thundering paws resounded nearby. A profound voice barked distant orders. Violetkit flattened her ears, striving to blend in with the den's shade.

The *thumping* paws crescendoed and suddenly shadowed figures charged through the barren campground. Weakening felines were crumpled by the galloping warriors. Bellows of suffering from the trampled cats flanked with the wicked screeches building one

sinister symphony.

The yowls soon withered along with the blustering of paws. Blood intoxicated the air like a nose-curdling perfume. Violetkit pricked her ears, harking the agonizing groans emanating from the injured warriors. She began to sob. Violetkit couldn't contain the disheartening anxiety spiraling within her head. She didn't understand- *where was she? Why was this happening to them?*

Abruptly, a pair of striking green eyes faced hers. Violetkit was promptly breathless. The dazzling eyes that lay before her kindled her soul with such passion she had never encountered. "Are you okay?"

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

iii | a plan

[image]

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His eyes flared into her soul: it was as if she were gazing into the moon. The stunning green-tone kindled the shady den. "Are you okay?" He spoke once again. The softness of his voice was like the surface of a flower's corollas.

Violetkit swayed her head gently. "Y-Yes, I am."

The older kit grinned kindly. His chestnut fur was barely evident in the gloominess of the den. Light from the moon writhed in smoothly and gaze the apprentice's perception. They stood, blindly gaping at each other, in the midst of the night. The wind flustered their tuft and cooled the atmosphere.

"I'm Adderkit, but please, call me Adderpaw." He introduced quietly. Adderkit sure appeared too mature to be a kit therefore, Violetkit would address him as Adderpaw.

She purred slightly, "Tis' a pleasure to meet you." Within a discussion inside her soul, she considered the thought of being called Violetpaw. She acted on that thought, "Please, call me Violetpaw."

Adderpaw flushed, "What a lovely name. Are you acknowledged for your gorgeous eyes?" He began to wander from the already-crowding den. The bitter night fell upon their tattered pelts.

The apprentice's fluffy words toyed with the molly's heart senselessly. "Oh no," She chortled modestly. Violetpaw's thoughts strayed into a murkier subject. She studied the husky warriors besieging the camp, their eyes mirroring fires in the seclusion. "Do you know why we're here?" She cleared her throat before inquiring.

Adderpaw snorted, shooting a quick glare at the edges of the territory. "I've heard rumors."

"What are they?"

The pair ceased in their tracks. The verdant field lay before them while the lifeless locks crunched under their heavy pads. Adderpaw seated himself down, gazing at the bright orb in the sky intently. "Wolfstar, the old leader of ThunderClan, ascended to power and founded a dictatorship." The flaxen novice halted, swallowing his words. *"WolfClan."*

Violetpaw's mind churned in confusion; so many unsettled questions. "Why are we here?"

Adderpaw simpered as if the topic were amusing. His tail peak popped the she-cat's chin blandly, "Don't you know, Violetpaw? We're prisoners." His eyes glimmered suddenly. With a blunt move, he sashayed into the nightfall.

Violetpaw, becoming frustrated, frowned. She scrambled after the strutting tom, seeking further into her query. "But why?" She demanded.

"Oh, Violetpaw," Adderpaw bellowed suddenly, his remarkable eyes whipping around to engage with the coal-colored female's. "You ask too much. *Relax.*" The words rolled from his tongue.

Rage thundered within her bloodstream. She halted sharply, her claws digging nests into the barren soil. "How can you say that?" She mourned, sensing heat dispute underneath her orbs. "We're dying, Adderpaw!" Her lip twitched in sorrow as she was lost over the control of her emotions.

The tom's mood shifted entirely. His solemn expression sunk into the lifeless area around him. He shuffled closer to the gray molly, his hot breath ruffling her whiskers gently. He whispered sleekly, his voice softer than the fur which grew on sheep's backs, "I have a plan."

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

As if the night couldn't get any more beautiful, it did.

They lounged on the hillside, the inky expanse accepted as their canvas of ideas. Twinkling stars envied over their striking eyes as both objects gaped at each other with pleasure. Violetpaw yielded her stomach to the heavens as she snickered and listened to her companion's stories. For the past weeks, her thoughts were trained on a new topic: Adderpaw.

Adderpaw was poetry in a world that was still learning the alphabet. His soul was pure. Nothing seemed to harm him; he had such an intellectual outlook on life. Violetpaw embraced it. She had never met such a character like this novice.

"In my old home, my brother and I used to race into the expansive fields. The wind would bustle our fur as we galloped. It was the best feeling in the world; freedom and the passion of flying. Your heart throbbing in your chest as the ground moved underneath you at miles a minute." His eyes flickered as they reflected the tranquil past.

"Sounds amazing." Violetpaw breathed while her eyes devoured the moment.

Adderpaw responded slightly. "It was." He paused. His emerald eyes turned as they met with his friend's. "Not as amazing as some things though." He purred, his stunning eyes blaring into Violetpaw's. Her heart seemed to burst into flames and spread within her bloodstream like a wildfire.

She welcomed the warmth as it rose to her whiskers. She dragged her spheres away, "Do you ever dream?" The young she-cat wondered. Violetpaw wasn't much of an utopist until she encountered Adderpaw. Her thoughts around the tom developed life.

The tom writhed into a comfortable position. A grave expression plastered over his face. "I do." He sighed exaggeratingly. "I dream of leaving this hole. I wish to see my brother again. I wish freedom to all of us." His eyes turned heavy.

Violetpaw cringed as the sadness hit her hard. "W-Where is your brother now?"

"He's a hero." Adderpaw titled his head to the side as the memories burst into his mind. "There's a Rebellion, located on the outside of WindClan. A cluster of cats; he's apart of them."

Violetpaw was shocked. She couldn't gather the words emanating from the tom's mouth. "What's his name?"

"Rowanpaw."

Pity danced in the dense atmosphere separating them. Violetpaw felt the obligation to make certain her friend was happy. She was fueled with a spark of hope. She abruptly sprang to her paws, scaring Adderpaw in the action. Excitement tore through her bones. "Why don't we?" Violetpaw declared. "Why don't we escape? You can see him again. We can join his rebellion."

Adderpaw flinched in uncertainty.

"You said you had a plan!" The feline roared in passion. "What have we got to lose?"

The chestnut tom was now on his paws, his face inches away from his friend's. "Our lives." He hesitated before proceeding. "You... I don't want to lose you."

Violetpaw beamed weakly. "You're not gonna." In a flash, she pressed herself upon him. The warmth bounded from their bodies insanely wild as they embraced each other. The couple apprentices stood, bracing each other together in hot affection. As if this was the last time...

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

iv | alone

[image]

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The images were sharp in her mind; the chestnut's blood, his blood-curdling screech, his heavy green eyes. Violetpaw sobbed, tears flooding her eyes. She cried into the hopeless night, her heart crumbling into shards of scrap.

With a swift swipe, Violetpaw was thrown to the ground. She whimpered feeling the cold ground press against her back. Twilight layered over the brawny figure like a thin sheet of silk. His vicious blue eyes fastened along with Violetpaw's own. She sobbed as the warrior's claws pierced further into her legs. "P-Please stop."

"This should teach you never to escape!" The brawny tom shouted gruffly.

Violetpaw rocked her head vigorously. She couldn't believe what had happened; paradise turned to horror. In her empty daze, her eyes captivated the shadow of a small figure quivering beside the warrior. The character had stunning ice-like eyes which seemed to be colorless with panic. He gazed at Violetpaw intently as if he were trying to tell her something.

Her thoughts were cut short by the tom's harsh roar, "Scram!" His claws withdrew from her tottering frame. Without a second of hesitation, the gray apprentice was scrambling for her life. Violetpaw dashed through the night, her hot breath searing her lungs. With tears taunting her eyes, she slipped into the campground. *Alone.*

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Adderpaw was dead.

Violetpaw felt dead.
Though, she was very much alive. Violetpaw had never undergone so much grief. It was if the world had developed a buffer of frost and she was freezing to death. Violetpaw killed the night sobbing, too weak to calm herself. The one she had loved most... was gone.

Although, concealed underneath the current of despair was a spark of hope. It may have only been a meager form, but it was exceedingly powerful. Violetpaw sensed the energy sear her bloodstream as it began to heal her sorrows. Adderpaw may have been deceased, though his relishing green eyes lived on.

The chestnut tom had once told Violetpaw, *"Find what you'd die for, and live for it."* Everything seemed apparent: Violetpaw wanted to die for The Rebellion. For the existing cats that are endeavoring for peace. Violetpaw was craving for vengeance. She must defeat WolfClan.

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

{a few minutes before adderpaw's death}

Twilight was stretched across the heavens; purple, orange, and faint yellows tossed upon the once gloomy canvas. The sun was beginning to dip below the horizon, welcoming the night.

"Come here, son." A gruff voice seared through the apprentice's deep visions. The son, rotating his eyes stared at his father heavily and quivered with quick apprehension. His father was someone not to testify with; a power-hungry soul. The apprentice knew his father did not desire his son's quandaries and barely cared that breath was still existing in his body.

"Yes, Wolfstar?" The amateur challenged softly. He dare not go near his father.

The leader's striking eyes sufficed with his son's. Resentment boiled within the explicit orbs. "I said come here." Wolfstar didn't have to repeat himself; the apprentice had stumbled uphill to his father.

The two relatives relaxed on the edge of a jagged boulder, gazing intently at the descending sun. The earth appeared to bow underneath their very own paws. Cats from below resembled ants, scouring around and chanting orders.

"Are you witnessing this?" Wolfstar spoke firmly again. "Stormpaw?"

His son, who was identified as Stormpaw, approved. He was too startled to speak.

"This kingdom will *all* be yours one day. You heed my paws and proceed to expand WolfClan." The leader ceased his tone, his eyes slipping down upon his son. "The sun will never set on WolfClan and soon StarClan will be yielding to us. Do you hear me? I want you to practice like a true warrior; more than a warrior." Wolfstar orbs suddenly trailed away to a shadowed figure lurking in the corner. He flicked his tail, signaling for the warrior to advance.

Stormpaw grumbled in uneasiness. All his father wanted was supremacy. He couldn't stop pushing. More. More. *More Stormpaw!* The apprentice was drained of everything.

He fought the tears back promptly.

"My advocate here is going to take you to the land of convicts and you will learn how to keep back strays." The captain paused, licking his chops. "Now go." He didn't have to declare it twice.

The sky was beginning to shadow. Stars started to leap from the inky black stretch, giving off tiny amounts of light. The two felines trekked through the deep undergrowth swiftly. Deceased leaves crunched under their heavy pads and soon neared the campsites.

"Sh," The older warrior ordered, ducking down into a crouch. Stormpaw frowned, mimicking the warrior. He felt the chilling leaves amuse his abdomen. Stormpaw pricked his ears, confused to what was befalling.

Only a few fox-lengths ahead of the duo remained two young cats. Under the midnight light stood a tom with a blazing ginger coat

and a she-cat with dusky fur. They seemed to be creeping from the campsite.

Before Stormpaw comprehended it, his mentor was tackling the orange tom. The she-cat screeched. Horror had unfolded within seconds. Stormpaw was dumbfounded. He stood uselessly, under the pale moonlight, observing as the young prisoner was slaughtered to death.

Blood trickled from the orange tom and settled as a pool around Stormpaw's pads. He was completely breathless. Sadness swamped his heart.
The grizzled she-cat was weeping, embracing her beloved until death parted them. The young apprentice's heart burrowed deep in his chest as the prisoner's heavy eyes embraced his. A misty breeze chilled his bones.

Stormpaw felt deceived. His father was following all of this; all of these soul's deaths. He sensed the urge to leave. Stormpaw wanted nothing to do with this turmoil. The apprentice ducked in his head in hot shame and revolved. He trudged back to camp in a solemn downfall.

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v | son

[image]

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Stormpaw couldn't believe what had happened; he killed an innocent soul. Breath passed heavy from his nostrils as he fought for air. The climate was suffocating, the young tom couldn't breathe. Anxiety attacked his heart sharply, sending ripples of fear and frustration through him. Stormpaw faced the wall of his stone den, panting.

He couldn't continue; every bone in his body screamed to run away. His father was insane and he turning too. A sudden cluster of voices broke his swamped head,
"Why isn't he training?" The demanding tongue of his father spat.

"He said he didn't feel like working today, sir." The apprentice recognized his mentor's sound. What he was confessing was true, how could Stormpaw possibly train again? The ginger tom's blood was still stained on his paws from the night before.

Wolfstar, his father, huffed. "He'll change his mind." He hesitated, licking his chops. "Let me talk to him."

Stormpaw anticipated his father's presence. He listened to the faint *thumping* of paw-steps increasing as the leader neared. Stormpaw's eyes rotated, focusing upon the muscular figure of his father. He inhaled deeply, unsheathing his claws. "I'm not fighting." He declared as his ancestor drew alongside him.

Wolfstar's silence was deafening. The brawny captain smoothly slid towards his son, his cutting eyes boiling with resentment. "WolfClan protectors are not reluctant to murder." The leader grumbled as he seated himself behind Stormpaw. "You will-"

Stormpaw intercepted his father, "Murder is wrong."

The stillness which approached sent concern thundering throughout the apprentice. Disrespecting Wolfstar was punishable by death- *what had he done?* As the swift realization struck Stormpaw, so did Wolfstar's claws. A thin layer of flesh hooked around the dictator's claws as he wounded his son.

Stormpaw screeched in pain, blood oozing onto his fur. He doubled backward, reaching contact with the frozen stone of the hollow. "Coward!" Wolfstar's earsplitting howl echoed throughout the forest, rattling the tops of trees.

"No-" Stormpaw begged on behalf of his life as the furious figure of his father gazed upon him.

"You listen to me, Stormpaw," Wolfstar commanded rigidly. "No one *dares* disrespect me and get away with it. You have shown disgrace to *your* Clan, you should be ashamed." Spit sizzled from the tom's tongue as he scowled. In a moment of vexation, Wolfstar sneered, "You're not *my* son."

Stormpaw, now persisting proudly, beamed in triumph. He appeared as powerful as diamond; cold and brilliant. His father could not break him. "I was never your son."

Wolfstar's eyes snapped around faster than a bullet tearing through the air. Sudden fear flashed within the amber orbs as they absorbed the sight of the pretentious apprentice. The silvery tom snapped from his trance and recollected himself.
A dangerous grin smeared across Wolfstar's face. "*Oh, Stormpaw...*" He breathed. "You know what I do to traitors. And you've just announced yourself as one of them."

The apprentice shook his head gradually.

"You have ten seconds." Wolfstar's claws slid from the sockets. He was looming Stormpaw's death; urging him to run. "Nine, eight.."

Stormpaw's eyes widened in horror, "You wouldn't." He softly spoke near his father.

"Did I stutter?"

The young tom bolted from the den, tearing through the shadows. His heart throbbed against his chest as he galloped down the stone edge of the camp rock. He could feel WolfClan's eyes searing through his fur. Stormpaw squeaked in terror, the Clan was upon him.
As the apprentice attempted to outrun WolfClan, he was soon surrounded by husky warriors. They stood as tall as towers, ambushing the amateur inwards. Flashes of orbs pierced the dawning sky as they focused upon their prey.

Stormpaw, out of breath, gazed upwards. Overlooking the amusing madness, rested his father, his dazzling eyes silencing the silent air. The sun began to rise overhead his presence, casting a dangerous shadow. Stormpaw could do nothing but pray for mercy.

Wolfstar grinned distinctly, entertainment glossy in his eyes. He cocked his head and flicked his tail swiftly. Stormpaw comprehended the signal, the protectors of WolfClan were addressed permission to attack.

With a final outlook on the chaos, Wolfstar dipped his head and rotated around. He dispersed into the concealment of the shadows, neglecting his son. Wolfstar had no mercy.

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vi | storm running

[image]

aesthetic made by zephyrr-

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The dawning sun sliced through the grizzled clouds, shafts of light coloring the death-toned campground. Exhausted prisoners awoke to the sunrise. Violetpaw, now moons older than an apprentice, rose to her paws with the warriors. She had been caged for more than half her life; she had witnessed cats come and go, watched as the Clans surrendered to WolfClan. Her world had turned upside down.

The vulnerable, silvery she-cat trudged from her foul nest, joining a pack of advancing hostages. They stumbled along slowly, eyes devouring the ground their paws smooth upon, tails dragging in the dust in hopelessness. For a flash, Violetpaw thought, *how could she have turned into one of these cats?* Then again, how could she not? A new rule had passed in WolfClan, any prisoner older than thirteen moons would be put to labor no matter their physical ability. Violetpaw was older than thirteen moons and was currently migrating to work.

Muscular WolfClan escorts surrounded the pack of prisoners, shouldering them onward. A sudden shriek pierced the daybreak air. Violetpaw's dark, melancholy eyes converged upon an elder being bashed by a juvenile tom. The glint of claws shocked the stale atmosphere.

As the stone-colored she-cat stood numbly, something seized her soul. A spark, that once long ago, possessed her displayed itself again. The blazing sensation curled through Violetpaw's bones. Without any restraint of herself, the aged she-cat vaulted forward. She roared wordlessly, projecting herself into the tom with enough force to knock him over.

The tom, blinded by Violetpaw, toppled over backward. He grunted

as he arrived in contact with the swamped ground. Commands from other protectors barked in the background. Abruptly, Violetpaw was uprooted from the tom and thrown onto the ground. Razor-sharp claws pressed her head down, driving her nose into the dirt. She squeaked, breath being blocked from her nostrils.

"Stop, stop!" A loud tom's voice ordered, beginning the group around the activity to cease instantly. Violetpaw swung her head sideways, her head still remaining locked down. Only cat's paws were apparent to her.

"Let her go." The same voice charged again.

"But sir-"

"I said let her go."

Violetpaw's crown was released. She inhaled distinctly, her eyes rising to face the voice. As her optics faced the appearance of the voice, her blood went cold. The tom's hue radiated with a strange familiarity. Half of his face was torn off, covered with heavy scars. But the other side held a simmering amber sphere. One that brought back many, many moons ago. Violetpaw's stomach churned with unease.

Hot tears sprouted in her eyes as memories flashed beneath them, "You..." She breathed. "I know you." She was trembling as tears began slipping from her eyes. "You killed him-"

A WolfClan warrior intercepted, "Stormrunner, we ought-" He was silenced by the flick of the tom's tail.

The tom, identified as Stormrunner, took a bold stride forward, bearing the prisoner. "I have died every day grieving what I did. Out of every scar I have, yours left me the most wounded."

Violetpaw sensed her heart sink in sorrow. She studied his removed face, how the scars and tears painted destruction. Words dissolved on her tongue, she was completely speechless.

Stormrunner signaled to his patrol, "Go onwards, I will return her soon." His squadron of protectors agreed, nudging the inmates

forward. Confusion formed a puddle inside Violetpaw's mind. Where was she going?

"Come with me." Stormrunner's voice was deep with control. He pressed against Violetpaw, urging her forward. The she-cat, taking a last glance at what was her home for most her life. She observed the tumbled dens and battered terrains. Although the area seemed like a junkyard, she called it home.

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Stormrunner led Violetpaw through a heavy groove of woods fearlessly. Violetpaw, confounded, followed with unease. She marched up the steep slope, her pads beginning to ache. Stormrunner, halting at the edge of the slope, slid into a hunter's crouch. He snuffed at the fallen leaves a few times before speaking, "This is the worst timing."

Violetpaw frowned and slid down alongside him. "Worst timing for what?" She obliged noiselessly.

Stormrunner, with a reckless grin smeared on his face, muttered, "Escaping."

Violetpaw froze. She couldn't believe her ears; *escaping*? For years on end, she dreamed about this day, definitely not like this. "We're leaving? Are you insane? We're going to be slaughtered." The grizzled she-cat swung her head as she backed away. "I can't do this."

"Let's keep a little optimism." The brawny coal-colored tom grumbled sarcastically. "Besides," He added with a tint of sincerity traced in his voice, "I think living is scarier than dying."

"Why are you doing this? To prove your point? I understand, Stormrunner, you're sorry. I-I can't let you do this." Violetpaw began to vibrate again. Terror shot through her bloodstream.

Stormrunner neared the startled molly. He simpered softly and drew her in with his tail. "Trust me, I'm doing this for both of us." He rumbled as he embraced the shivering she-cat. "You're safe if

you're with me."

Violetpaw sensed a boost of courage fuel her soul. She pulled from the enbosom, adjusting herself. "Let's do this."

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vii | escape

[image]

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As the midday sun rose into the air, rays of white light splitting through the scales of the towering pine trees. Grizzled clouds covered over the rooftops barely layering over the sky. The she-cat crouched at the bottom of the hill, her heavy eyes trained on the commotion in front of her. She pressed her claws into the crunchy needles, fire blazing within her bloodstream.

"When do we move?" She muttered, her eyes catching a glimpse of her companion.

Her companion, a muscular, blemished warrior grumbled, "Now," He snatched her harshly, pulling the vulnerable molly to his side.

Violetpaw squeaked in surprise as she was smoothed against Stormrunner's side. She stumbled along, recognizing an even bigger WolfClan protector onward. As the couple neared the protector, his sharp yellow eyes glowered over them. The protector advanced a few excessive strides forward, his claws sliding from their sockets.

"My, my, Stormrunner," The protector breathed. "Look what they've done to you." He examined the cluster of marks aloft the feathery tom. Stormrunner's expression grimed. "You've made me look like a bad mentor." The old tom resumed.

Stormrunner, with a thin smile forming at the edge of his lips, swayed his head. "Of course not Molesnake. You taught me a lot." Lies splattered from his golden teeth. Violetpaw, in the middle of the two large toms, couldn't help but shiver. *What was happening?*

Molesnake, with a touch of satisfaction, dipped his head. "Where are you going?" The former mentor challenged, his glimmering eyes falling onto Violetpaw.

"Er, Wolfstar has requested to meet with this prisoner, don't mind us." The director's son attempted to push past Molesnake but was jostled backward firmly. Violetpaw grasped the sudden realization of being caught as they were shoved.

"If Wolfstar needed a prisoner, he would've come to me." The brawny bronze tom growled, taking a minute to study the panic sparkling in Stormrunner's eye. "What's going on?"

Before he could reply, Stormrunner was tackled to the ground. He writhed under the heavy pressure of Molesnake. Violetpaw, screeching, evaded the attack. A hollow sadness stormed in her chest as she watched her comrade suffer under stiff paws.

Blood dribbled across Stormrunner's face as his mentor reopened previous scars. "You're a traitor, you know that Stormrunner?" Molesnake howled as he ripped opened Stormrunner's shoulders. "You know what we do to traitors..."

Violetpaw's heart thrummed in her chest, blocking external noises. With each heartbeat, a voice thundered in her head: *Not again. Not again. Not again!* She roared wordlessly as she bounded into the air. Molesnake, eyes flowing with confusion, tumbled over at the strength of Violetpaw.

In a moment of hesitation, Violetpaw gazed at the aging tom. Blood oozed from his nose, blurring into his thick fur. "I-I'm sor-" Before she could finish, the gray she-cat was struck across the nose. A stinging sensation swept through her.

"Violetpaw! Run," Once Stormrunner's command left his lips, the pair were bolting through the forest. Undergrowth snagged at their bellies. Everything was a blur; the lush plants smeared underneath Violetpaw's thundering feet. She, inches behind Stormrunner, felt the spark within her soul ignite. Adrenaline pulsated through her veins and she was suddenly galloping in front of her companion.

They entered a different kind of forest; the trees were a different shade of green and happened to be lower to the ground. The sun bristled through the sharp-tipped, youthful leaves, striking rays through the forest. Violetpaw, panting in a sweating mess,

examined the strangeness of the woods.

"Stunning, isn't it?" Stormrunner's thick voice intercepted her thoughts. He too, was puffing.

Violetpaw brandished her head blatantly in agreement. "What are we going to do now?" She took a swift glimpse back, pleading nothing was tracking them. "What if we get caught?" Her lavender-toned eyes expanded in immediate fright. "I don't want to die..." The molly mumbled.

Stormrunner simpered softly as he witnessed his friend's nervousness. "We're going to be okay. Though, we must keep moving." The sturdy tom regarded Violetpaw from his one blue orb. "It's time for our journey."

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Resentment burned within him like a raging fire. Blood smeared onto his thick brown fur as he wiped his dribbling muzzle. He trekked up the long hike to the leader's den, unable to hear himself under his blazing hatred. "Wolfstar," He acknowledged gravely while bowing his head.

The insomniac dictator twisted around, heeding the sudden sound. "Molesnake?" Wolfstar's somber eyes then fell upon the faint droplets of blood falling from the warrior's nose. "What happened to you?"

"Your son!" He spat. He slithered forward, his ghostly eyes striking the darkening atmosphere. "He was with this scrawny prisoner and they confessed both were escaping." Molesnake, the tattered combatant, hissed with vexation sizzling off his tongue.

Wolfstar's claws *clattered* along the stone flooring. His eyes smoldered the air. "How could you let this happened?" He demanded, seizing his Clanmate by the neck.

Caught by true surprise, Molesnake stammered, "Th-They attacked me!" He hacked loudly, slobber shrouding the leader as he squeezed the air from the bronze tom.

"And you weren't strong enough to fight them off? You *mouse~heart*!" Wolfstar cursed as he flung the warrior. Molesnake tumbled beyond the den, his hindquarters encountering the unyielding walls.
Wolfstar persisted, reflecting his thousands of thoughts. *Why was everything now turning against him? Everything was fine before.* He cleared the salvia from his abundant fleece, retaining his dignified posture. "You find *both* of those rats and bring them back to me. Alive!" The grizzled leader shouted as he faced Molesnake.

As the tom redeemed to his paws, a wicked smile shifted onto his face. "And if I don't..." He threatened. Molesnake knew Wolfstar wouldn't slaughter him, after all, he was the only one who remembered where the escapists disappeared.

Wolfstar's head cocked to the side as he studied the lithe figure gain his stance. His amber cores blistered the tension. "If you're so eager to apperceive, I can show you early..." Wolfstar's menace *rolled* off his tongue smoothly. The leader neared the trembling tom, towering over him. When he succeeded no response, Wolfstar whispered, "Leave. *Now*."

He didn't have to repeat: Molesnake was bounding for the forest. His heart clumping in his chest as he fled. He would make no mistake in obtaining the rebels. He wanted his leader proud. And satisfied he would be.

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viii | an old friend

[image]

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The night sky covered the forest like a heavy blanket. Stars blazed through the sable wool, the only source providing light. Dense clouds passed slowly over the shimmering balls of light, blocking their brilliant shine.
Violetpaw's adolescent eyes observed nature's wonder as she relaxed upon a hillside. The long strands of grass rippled in the sudden gusts of wind, tickling her paws. The serene scene reminded her of one she had spent long ago with an old friend.

"I wonder if he's watching." The molly muttered as her eyes were lost on the stars.

Stormrunner, dragging a deceased squirrel up the mound, pricked his ears. "Who?" His voice was muffled behind the rodent. Envy tinted his one eye as he considered Violetpaw.

The pale she-cat sighed. "An old friend." Warm tears brimmed in her eyes as the memories came scorching as a flame. "I miss him from the bottom of my heart." She sobbed silently, dipping her head to hide herself.

Stormrunner was overtaken by a passion of guilt. He dropped the squirrel. The dark gray tom seated himself next to his comrade, and in an attempt to comfort, his tail intertwined with hers. "I'm sorry." He mumbled.

Violetpaw swung her head. "No, don't be. We were all too young." Her eyes abruptly locked into Stormrunner's and they fell into a haze. The muscular tom couldn't withstand the beauty of the she-cat before him. Before Stormrunner could speak, Violetpaw infringed. "He has a brother. Adderpaw told me of the Rebellion. We must find them."

Rejection spiraled through Stormrunner; how badly in love he felt with Violetpaw. But he feared she didn't feel the same, and she didn't. She was stuck on a dead tom.

"You're right. I've overheard rumors too. The Rebellion hides in the abandoned tunnels of WindClan, striving to heal." Stormrunner decided that bottling his emotions away, for now, would be best. Maybe once he and Violetpaw were safe, he would concede. "I concluded that we should follow the lake and pass through RiverClan until we reach WindClan's territory."

Violetpaw suddenly shuddered as her home was mentioned. *Would she be ready to face her birthland? What about her mother?*
"Are you okay?" Stormrunner's somber voice hindered her saddening thoughts.

She lied. "Yeah."

"C'mon." Stormrunner beckoned with a flick of his tail. "We must keep going." He directed the way through the open expanse, the long grasses swallowing more than half of his figure.

Violetpaw, with one last longing look at the stars, took off behind him. Sorrow and old anguish curled in her body as memories bore beneath her eyes. Would she survive much longer?

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As early sunlight bore through the empty sky, the two cats continued their journey through the forest. Exhaustion didn't seem to bother them as adrenaline fueled their actions. Stormrunner gleefully strode next to Violetpaw, observing the wilderness out of his one eye. However, she didn't seem as enthusiastic.

"You don't talk to me much," Stormrunner commented blandly as they proceeded down the pine-needled path. "What's wrong? Is it my face?" The tom questioned sadly. He could still feel the agony of half of his face being ripped to shreds. He shuddered.

"No, of course not." Violetpaw reassured as life seemed to be present with her again. As the pair moved through the tangle of woods, the

sun was starting to rise above the forest. Sunlight glittered her eyes, "I just feel like I don't know you very well."

"Well," Stormrunner smiled. "Get to know me. Ask me, anything!" He boldly declared as he nudged Violetpaw spiritedly.

"Okay," Violetpaw beamed back, though she was hesitant. "How did you get those horrible scars?" The question slipped from her mouth before she could comprehend what she was asking.

Stormrunner flinched.
The creamy she-cat gasped as she came to a precipitate realization. "Oh my, I'm so sorry. That was stupid of me to ask." Sunlight blistered down on her face as the cats came into an opening. The pine-needled trail ceased.

"It's okay." Stormrunner ruffled his long fur. "Try something else."

Violetpaw, flustered with embarrassment, continued. "Okay, what was your family like?" The pair waded through the sunny grasses. The scent of WolfClan was beginning to gradually fade.

Stormrunner withdrew from wincing. He hadn't mentioned to Violetpaw yet that Wolfstar was his kin. Deep down, the tom was deeply afraid to. His father was what provoked the she-cat all of her anguish and grief. *He couldn't tell her.* "My father died before I was born. And my mother was obliged to become a WolfClan queen. Resulting in myself embellishing a protector." Lies spewed from his tongue. Only registering now, Stormrunner had nothing good to share about himself.

"And, Molesnake was your mentor?" Violetpaw suspected, remembering what had heard before.

"Correct." Stormrunner flicked his tail. "No matter how corrupt he is, he's an intelligent tom. Which mostly drives my fear of being caught."

Violetpaw shook her head. "I'm sure we'll be fine. We're-" Before finishing her statement, a sickly aroma passed into her nostrils. The she-cat gagged as her stomach lurched. Stormrunner scented it too

as he turned away instantly.

Violetpaw's eyes then scanned the new area and she *regretted* it.
Her heart dropped into her chest at the perception.
She gasped, "Oh my..."

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ix | hunting ashes

[image]

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Violetpaw gasped for air. The surfaces of her eyes crinkled with indescribable sorrow. Her home was gone. The base of the RiverClan was layered in suffocating black soot. Thin scraps of ashes danced in the coarse air as they slipped from the lifeless trees. The eerie atmosphere enclosed around the young warrior. She could feel her head becoming lighter and she was fixed to faint.

"Oh StarClan," Stormrunner breathed as his paws crunched over the devastation. His single eye blinked as ashes powdered his features. "No wonder Wolfstar didn't claim this land."

The pale she-cat seated herself, grief prickly in her chest. Although she had only brief memories of her old life, they stung. Her orbs clamped shut as profuse paint dragged her into conflict. Flickers flashed within her head; she remembered the fire, the devastation, the torturous screams. It all happened so fast.

Stormrunner eyed his confrere in confusion, "Violetpaw, are you alright?"

"It's my home." Her despairing voice sliced the air. "This was my home."

The feathery tom felt the sudden, rude awakening. *It was his father's fault, he did all of this.* Anguish drenched his speech, "We should keep going."

Violetpaw, stunned at his sudden graveness, simply agreed. Time was boiling and she was sure every tom in WolfClan was on their tail. The pair quickly hurdled through the ruins, gray blurring underneath her paws. The impatience for leaving something so hazy behind was painful. Tears brimmed Violetpaw's eyes as she wished to sojourn and mourn the deaths of so many.

Stormrunner led her from the sickening forest. His confidence placed her shattered pieces together. He was so brave while she was a weeping mess. As they both came to a slower pace, the outgrown apprentice sided him. "I'm so sorry." She explained softly. "I-"

Her companion interrupted. "You don't owe me an explanation. I understand." His stone-cold aura seemed to disappear as his inviting character comforted the stressed she-cat. She leaned into the tom, trust bouncing between the two.

"Thank you." She openly muttered as she gazed at the tom.

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He snuffed at the ground, passion trailing within his bloodstream. The strong scent of ashes clustered in his nostrils. With the smoky scent smoldering the runaways' scents, he would never track them down.

He ruffled his bronze pelt, anger hot in his chest. Wolfstar would never forgive him without bearing the refugees. Wolfstar had sent Molesnake with two other protectors to bring back his son and the prisoner. Molesnake was currently failing as the fragrances were drifting away.

"Molesnake?" A tom's voice sliced his swirling thoughts. "We found something."

Molesnake, with a downcasting appearance set on his features, followed the tom through thick shrubby. The brown tom rumbled to himself as his team, most of the time, was as useless as a deceased squirrel. "This better be good."

Suddenly, the opening view struck the tom. He couldn't believe his eyes. The old RiverClan campus was just tufts of ash and soot. He remembered many moons ago anchoring the large fire, which soon grew out of control for WolfClan. A large feverish grin spread onto his face.

"Pawprints." The tom pointed to with the tip of his nose. He wasn't wrong. Shaped with shards of silvery cinders were two sets of

pawprints, leading a trail through the empty territory.

"Well done." Molesnake reverenced the team for their findings. "Let's capture these traitors."

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x | goodnight

[image]

aesthetic by eveningfawn-

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The long-lasting, crisp night finally ended as dawn broke through the sky. The cascading colors echoed in the ripples of the lake as the sun awoke the resting forest. The chilly breeze nipped at Stormrunner as he perched by the lake, the water curling under his paws. A strong passion seized him, something which was growing stronger in his bones each day. He believed the sensation was something in his bloodline; there was no escape.

The lies he had previously told Violetpaw seared his head. He couldn't keep misleading such a beautiful she-cat however with a truth like his, she'll despise him forever.

Violetpaw, appearing from the shrubbery behind the lake, smiled as she faced her companion. "Good morning, sleeping beauty." She teased with mockery glistening in her lavender eyes. "Watching the sunrise?" The ghostly she-cat purred under her voice as she perched beside the muscular tom.

Stormrunner nodded, his millions of thoughts being intercepted with such an enigmatic character. He averted his attention back to the sunrise, how the cascading colors layered upon each other to create a masterpiece. "Indeed I am, the colors are captivating. I can't help but think of you."

Fluster danced along Violetpaw's features as she embraced the tom's flirtatious comment. How ever much the two teased each other, Stormrunner always left Violetpaw speechless. Something about his charm was mouth drying.

Seconds after the silence, the tom questioned, "Do you ever think about changing your name? I mean, you're not an apprentice

anymore." Despite the stunning view ahead of him, Stormrunner would much rather gaze at Violetpaw. He grinned at her perplexed reaction.

"What would I change it too?"

Stormrunner shrugged even though an idea churned within him. He grinned eagerly as the warm sun tickled his skin. The sky's colors soaked his visions. Everything seemed much more alive around his companion. He wanted to hold her close, forever. "Violetsky. It would fit you perfectly."

Her heart seemed to spring in the suggestion. *She loved it.* "How so?" Violetpaw challenged, bending inward. Her body was mouse~lengths away from Stormrunner.

"Well," The tom began. His whiskers bristled as he too leaned towards his love. He spoke, his words becoming lost in her devouring eyes. "You're sweet and open; I feel like I've known you for years." His hide brushed against hers, sending ripples of heat storming through him. "But you have a hidden side, similar to the heavens."

Their muzzles were inches away from compressing. They swallowed each other's perceptions. Colors were thin in the air as they kept moving inward. Their whiskers intwined and latched together as their noses were about to touch-
Violetpaw was the first to pull away.

Stormrunner's once sealed orbs opened with the brutality he received. His body chilled as the realization of rejection struck him. The tension folded between the two, yanking on their hearts. Violetpaw wasn't ready for intimacy; she was broken.
But so was he...

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Every emotion in his bones was boiling. He perched on the edge of leader's rock, the night sky bowing along his jagged shoulders. Resentment was like a heavy stone in his chest, holding his breath. He could feel the power draining from him every second. With his

son and a prisoner on the loose, it could spark rebellion within the others and bolster a riot.

He suddenly gasped, the terror alive in his bloodline.

"Losing power is terrifying." His intense perceptions were unexpectedly interrupted by a she-cat's voice. Perplexed, the leader twisted around. His eyes fell upon a familiar figure of his past. His heart dropped.

"How did you get up here?" The challenged leader sought roughly, shifting his eyes back.

The character seated beside Wolfstar, her eyes trailing his own. She sucked in a hard breath. "I have my ways." She muttered almost to where one couldn't hear. Her long tufts of ginger fur blew back in the sudden gusts of wind.

Wolfstar gradually studied the silver forming around her fading features. "Why are you here?" He demanded with a hint of sternness hidden in his mew. "And shouldn't you despise me? I ruined your life, your reputation."

The antiquity between the two was scarcely memorized; for now, it was only flashes of light.
The she-cat exhaled as the wind caressed her fur once again. "I haven't been handled enough time to hate you, dear. Besides, I could not deny your fate." A small, yellow smile slipped onto her graying face. "You're still my young warrior in my eyes-"

"I shouldn't be." Wolfstar snarled thoughtlessly. "Haven't I spilled enough blood to make you apprehend?"

The she-cat decided not to respond. Although the smile didn't spill from her face. The blackness in her pupils reflected the midnight atmosphere as she gazed at the robust figure strides beside her. The memories flickered in the back of her head. The pain of losing a loved one to the darkness was undeniably frightening, but a life lived in fear is a life not lived at all. She exhaled in satisfaction as she decided it was time she left.

While on her way out she spoke, addressing the notability by his old, untainted, self. *"Goodnight, Wolfstorm."*

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xi | wind storms

[image]

aesthetic made by cinnamonbunns-

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Their quite blatant paws *crunched* along the tangle in unison as the pair made their path through the bone-dry forest. The mellow sensation of sadness was slowly fading from their pelts as they exited the old RiverClan territory. Violetsky, who was once Violetpaw and decided to alter her name, glanced at her companion's strict figure, pondering. The last few nights had been uncomfortable between the two. Though Violetsky felt an affinity towards Stormrunner, it was nothing like she'd sensed before.

A sudden zephyr intercepted her perceptions. The cool breeze tousled her long fur, tickling her chin. Her muscular friend strode forward, his blue eye-widening with awe. "We're here." He meowed, soaking in the visions. "Welcome to WindClan."

Violetsky too easily became lost in the views. The skyline seemed to bend over the land. Tapering hills painted the territory with long rich grasses striking the land and ruffling in the rough breezes. Clumps of hueful heather caught Violetsky's attention; they held her favorite hue. "Wow." The single word fluttered from her tongue.

"I know," Stormrunner replied, also losing himself in the landscapes. He crawled forward, the blasting wind storming on his pelt. He flattened his ears, fighting the powerful gusts. "Do you know where they are?" The tom had to shout over the racket of nature.

Violetsky, following his footsteps, slowly shook her head. She recalled Adderpaw once telling her tales that the hidden Clan tarried underground in tunnels. "Burrows, I think." She meowed. "Just look for a large opening or gap."

"Easier said than done." Stormrunner hissed while gazing over the

large land. The rippling long grasses covered the ground, secluding any potholes visible. He flicked his tail in slight annoyance. "StarClan, save us."

Right as the words lifted off his sarcastic tongue, a patrol of shapes emerged from the wavering greens. The characters held the opposite of what the pair expected to be Windclan; instead of having slender builds, the cats were muscular. The duo froze in terror as the brightness of their eyes marched nearer. Violetsky shuffled next to her muscular friend, frightened for the turmoil about to come.

Now, only fox~lengths away, the team of toms halted, perceiving Violetsky and Stormrunner. The director of the squadron spiked his dark fur, threatening the two companions. "Who goes there?" He questioned deeply, his tattered fangs attracting the attention of the pair. "Intruders?"

"N-No-" Stormrunner stammered as the fleet spurted hostile glares. "We're refugees from WolfClan. We're here for-"

The towering black tom snarled suddenly, intercepting the gray tom. A monstrous idea sprung into his head as the tom speaking explained they were from WolfClan. His brilliant eyes staggered as he devoured the information. The black tom scowled smoothly. "We're the Rebellion," He spoke with complete certainty, relaxing the pressure in the air. His warriors shot bewildered expressions but did not emit a sound. "I'll take you to our leader."

Violetsky's heart was deafening in her chest. She thanked the dark tom, both her and Stormrunner beginning to follow the brawny warriors to their tunnels. She couldn't believe within seconds she was going to adhere to the Rebellion; the assembly which so many rumors spiraled around. She marched in full confidence, prepared to take on anything.

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After trekking several miles over the rigid lands, the patrol soon neared an extensive tunnel hidden behind an acclivity. The tunnel darkened as it developed on beneath the hill. Violetsky froze as she

examined the murky burrow. The obscurity sent chills of terror through her.

The black captain slowed before reaching the entrance of the burrow. He purred lightly, "I must speak with our leader first." He flicked his tail at his warriors, sending a sort of signal. "Wait here." And with that, he slipped through the tunnel, his ebony fur dissolving into the darkness.

"Fangs," The dark-toned tom's thoughts were interrupted with a familiar flick of his name. He pricked his eyes, detecting the character from which his title came from. His captain. In an instant, he bowed his head.

"My dear," He mewed gruffly as he dressed the moon-white she-cat. "I've discovered something imminent." He announced proudly as his frame straightened up. His eyes impressed into her own as they gazed profusely at each other.

"Let's hear it."

Fangs ruffled his hide. "My patrol and I have found WolfClan refugees at our borders. They believe we are the Rebellion." He inhaled sharply, retaining his laughter concerning the foolishness involved. "If we deceive them, make them believe we are going to compete, we could use them."

His leader, a ghostly alabaster molly swung her head in uneasiness. Despite the cleverness of her rogue's plan, she was quartering herself in jeopardy.
Then again, she always liked danger. "Use them how?"

The excitement rushing through Fang's bloodstream was too much to handle. His paws trembled against the moist ground in anticipation. "If Wolfstar is on the hunt for his escapees, we could barter them for land, food, or soldiers. That mighty leader has never turned down a genuine trade."

All his leader did was smile. And the plan was established. Tricking the fellow kind was simple, but running with it was challenging. Although, there was no doubt that Fangs and the leader, Eponine,

would collapse...

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xii | tunnels of darkness

[image]

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After only minutes of waiting, the black captain of the squadron returned once again. He smoothly strode through the hole like it was nothingness. "She would like to see you both," He commented roughly. Slipping back towards the tunnels, accompanied by his fellow Clanmates.

Violetsky sucked in a jagged breath at the murky sight of the tunnels. She wished not to go down there for her spiked phobia of the dark.

Stormrunner noticed his love's fear, "You're going to be alright. Stay right behind me." He comforted, being nudged to follow the gray warrior.
Violetsky obeyed, following the tapered tip of Stormrunner's tail.

The silver she-cat could next feel a warrior's breath on her hindquarters. Although, the prolonged shaft only seemed to be getting worse with every step Violetsky completed. The walls were slowly starting to thin. Violetsky ceased in a complete panic, holding back the excess of the patrol. Darkness spiraled around her eyes like twisters and her head was full with dizziness.

"Violetsky," Stormrunner's reassuring voice demanded. "You're okay."

Voices clattered in her hears like dying symphonies. "Keep moving."

"Push her!"

With an abrupt shove, Violetsky came toppling forward into an open expanse. Light from small holes overhead shimmered, awakening Violetsky's senses. Cat's gasps erupted from around the squadron, millions of eyes focusing upon the gray she-cat. She

shook her head as if swinging away from the blurriness. She picked herself up, aware of the gazing.

"Fangs," A pale yellow molly meowed strictly. "Care to explain?" Her, along with two other cats, sat upon a dirt mound which was elevated higher in the air than the foundation of the Clan cats. The three cats stared down with perplexity. Although she and her dependable warrior had conversed just before about new arrivals, she assumed as though she had to put on a show for the rest of the "Clan."

The lush black tom cleared his throat. "While on my patrol, I befell these two cats who declare to be escapees from WolfClan." The small tribe all seemed to draw in a sharp breath as they attended to the information.

But as the dark tom continued his speech, Violetsky observed her surroundings. She remembered from long ago Adderpaw advised her of his kin, Rowanpaw. But from what the small she-cat could see, there was no Rowanpaw.

Suddenly, her reasoning was rudely cut short from the combatant proposing the two join the Rebellion to fight. Bursts of outrage echoed through the gathering as all the felines comprehended Fang's words. From what Violetsky could perceive, some desired mettle while the others opposed. Violetsky itched with apprehension as her ears detected nasty comments. In a sudden rush of emotion, the silver she-cat spoke, "I almost died."

The association all turned to her, silence swelled the air. Violetsky trembled while her eyes bulged with hot tears. "I've come extremely close to death so many times on my journey here. You, the Rebellion," Violetsky studied all the characters around her. "Were really the only thing keeping me alive. I wanted, I needed a fight. There are so many more back there who too need justice from Wolfstar's reign."

From the back of the small cluster of leader's, a brilliant alabaster she-cat stepped forward. Her bright amber eyes were attached to Violetsky as she spoke, "I admire your courage, young one. My team and I would appreciate if we discussed afterward." She flicked her

tail, sending the unknown signal towards her associate, Fangs. "Fangs, if you could show this young molly the way to my burrow."

The tom obeyed as he gradually shifted towards Violetsky. But paces before the she-cat, Stormrunner sprung vanguard Fangs, snarling. His claws slipped from his sockets, his position suggesting he was in defense.

"What about my friend?" Violetsky sought before chaos ran loose again.

The ghostly molly swung her head as she eyed Stormrunner. Something seemed to spark within her orbs which sent a toxic impression through Violetsky. "Just you."

As Fangs, once again, tried to near Violetsky, Stormrunner growled. Warriors nearby drew the brawny tom behind, keeping him from wounding Fangs. Stormrunner, ever so meek, "You hurt one hair on her and I will *kill* you." Only Fangs appeared to apprehend the husky tom's threat.

A dangerous smile slipped onto Fang's features. "No need to fret, your paramour is in sound claws." He grunted while giving Violetsky a small nudge onward.
Violetsky, giving one last pitiful flash at Stormrunner, followed the slender tom up the tight tunnels. She had not yet been separated from her companion for moons and was naturally terrified to. But her crusade from now was all for Adderpaw and the prisoners still stuck in WolfClan.

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"As for him," The white she-cat seemed to lose her softness as Violetsky's presence faded. Her sharp yet familiar eyes flattened upon Stormrunner. "Send him to the cave." Robust warriors came forward, thrusting Stormrunner towards a slim tunnel which split opposite from where Violetsky disappeared.

Stormrunner, lost in his thoughts, truly shivered in fear. His father was the reason all these cats had lost their homes and families. He was drowning in a puddle of guilt.

As he was being pushed toward the dark hole in the ground, he swiftly considered as if he deserved this. He was brewing monster; murder trailing in his bloodline.

Maybe being held captive was a good thing...

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"cave" = a large, dark hole; similar to a prison

xiii | second

[image]

aesthetic made by cinnamonbunns-

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"Will Stormrunner be alright?" The she-cat's nervous voice bounded from the dense structures of the tunnel. She paced quickly beside the dark-furred tom, now that the shafts were broader. Fangs, as odd as his name suggested, was sunken tom. His dark eyes seemed to be emotionless as he waddled beside the small she-cat.

Fangs snorted with a hint of amusement. "You two certainly do love each other."

Violetsky smiled softly as her eyes fell into the toms own. "Love is a very strong word. We're just friends." She informed Fangs as his atmosphere suddenly seemed to brighten. His once dismal hallmarks kindled with slight enthusiasm.

"Just comrades? Nothing further?" He sounded surprised. Violetsky nodded as the tom's excitement confused her. Though, she pushed it past as nothing more than a bipolar temperament. "Ah," Fangs exclaimed. "Well, the behavior this *Stormrunner* defends you suggests you are more than companions." The gray tom's menace from earlier was still resounding inside Fang's head. He grinned as he came to the realization Violetsky was Stormrunner's vulnerability; she just didn't acknowledge the fact.

Violetsky sighed, "He's lost a lot. We both have. Which probably makes us hard to separate; we've been protecting each other for a long time." As the words tumbled into the air, a sudden sadness swamped Violetsky. Her heart seemed to flutter at the thought of Stormrunner. Was *love* the correct term to define her and Stormrunner's connection?

Fleeing her inveigling thoughts, Violetsky touched into Fang's

somber optics. He gazed back. The stillness between the two was almost flirtatious as they lost themselves in each other's eyes. Fangs was the first to rupture the taciturnity, "Has anyone ever mentioned your eyes are extraordinary?"

Violetsky could feel the heat rise to her whiskers. As a matter of fact, many cats had commented on her strangely glazed eyes. But to keep the intense moment alive, she lied, "No. Not really." She chuckled lightly, noticing her body was only inches away from Fangs.

"Well, what fools are they?" Fangs teased, mirroring her chuckle. "Here we are."

The pair turned a sharp corner to a large expanse dug in the tunnels. Three nests of moss lay and Violetsky guessed it for the leaders. She observed the stunning depth, how much time it must have taken for these cats to build? Holes poked through the upper land, allowing light to flash down into the room.

Only waiting for a few minutes, the three directors Violetsky had seen before strode confidently into the room, taking their places among the beds of moss. She cleared her throat restlessly, feeling her paws begin to tremble.

"So," A dark ginger tom commenced with a frail displeasing look shaded on his face. "Let's get one thing clear: you lie to us and you'll be running for the winds." The austerity in his tone was bone-chilling.

"Flint!" The ghostly she-cat from before roared. "Let's show our guest some manners, please." She rolled her profound amber eyes and smiled as she confronted the small molly before her. "I apologize on the behalf of Flint, he's always been a bit grouchy." She whispered, sending both of the she-cats into a quiet chortle.

"I have no use to lie," Violetsky replied while examing all three of the leader's expressions. She flicked back her ears before taking in a large breath. It was time to sing her sincerity, though she never imagined it would be underground with four strangers.

The moon-toned she-cat beamed, "Please, young one, tell us everything. Where did you come from? Who are you?" Her words rattled the still air.

Violetsky sucked in a hard breath as she was about to speak everything that had been on her mind for moons. Now was her time; she must tell her truths and tragedies. She thrust her fears away and began to describe. She told them *everything*; from the massive fire to Adderpaw's death.

But as she did just so, Violetsky still felt unease with herself. It was as though she could sense the suspicion in the air. And she was sure to dig to the bottom of it.

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The small stones skidded along the floor from underneath his claws. He boiled in complete hatred; his empire seemed to be shattering from his paws. Prisoners were being executed every hour for attempting to escape, his protectors growing exhausted from the extra work being lain upon their shoulders. His son and the escapee sent ripples of hope through the clan and Wolfstar considered obliged to shut it down immediately.

As if hoped had arrived itself, Molesnake's familiar voice sliced the tense air. "I found them." He meowed with a bragging nature.

Wolfstar, the weary leader of WolfClan twisted in shock. "Are they here? Where are they?" His bright amber eyes sunk as he realized the slender tom was alone; no son or prisoner to be seen.

A lethal grin coated Molesnake's features. "They're with the remains of WindClan. I watched as they slipped underground." The dark bronze warrior watched as his captain's face scrunched in confusion. Feeling pressured to disclose, Molesnake proceeded. "WindClan has constructed an underground network of tunnels to hide." He lashed his tail, eyes shimmering as the ideas spun in his head. "We raid the burrows, we end the Rebellion."

A stimulating sensation flooded Wolfstar's veins. His depressed emotions all faded as a wicked plan spun in his head. "When did

you become so intelligent, Molesnake? Well done." He praised his faithful protector.

Although, *faithful* may have been the mistaken word to describe the brown warrior.
And little did Wolfstar know, Molesnake wore his disloyalty like a cruel second skin...

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xiv | deception

[image]

aesthetic made by Dewywrites

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"You've been through an awful lot, dear." The silver leader, Eponine, sympathized as she studied Violetsky's hallmarks. She could see the exhaustion pooling from the young warrior. She smiled softly, hoping to intrigue the prisoner.

Violetsky simply swung her head, her paws aching with apprehension. All the sympathy seemed false. She was strangely suspicious. "Er, if you don't mind me asking," She stumbled over her words in pure nervousness. "Where is my friend? Why isn't he here with us?"

The alabaster leader repositioned herself as she gazed at the young warrior. She tipped her head, her simper fading quickly. "Well, I'm not sure if you know who this 'friend' truly is." Her pale blue eyes were laced with sorrow as she spoke.

Violetsky began to tremble. *What did the leader mean by that?* A feverish temperature bolted through her blood system; she appeared sweltering then suddenly ice cold. *What was happening to her?* The gray molly forced back her sickness with a tight swallow. "What?" She choked.

"Bring him in."

A thundering echoed around the tunnels as a fleet of felines crashed inward. Stormrunner was one of them. Blood painted his grizzled fur from his ears to his paws. He was quaking in agony, tears prickling his eyes.

Violetsky's heartbeats were deafening. It was though a thunderstorm was trapped in her chest. Her eyes widened at the

sight of her bloodied companion. "Stormru-"

Eponine flicked her tail in hastiness. She faced Stormrunner, her expressions stiffening in fury. "Do you want me to tell her or are you going to declare your history?" She shouted, sending the entire gathering into silence.

Stormrunner, limping to maintain his balance, shook his head. Teardrops rolled down his weary face. "I-I'm sorry." Confusion swamped the molly's brain. *What were they talking about? What history?*

The Rebellion's leader scowled, her pearly fur bristling in fury. "Your friend is Wolfstar's son." As the words tumbled from her tongue, Violetsky's heart shattered. Droplets formed beneath her eyes. Her only companion had been lying to her this entire time. "He's murdered your kind. Violetsky, he has you so wrapped around his claws. He was going to return you to his father."

"That's not true!" Stormrunner cried above the unraveling chaos. "Don't listen to her!" Rebels held his backward, forcing the struggling warrior into the moist dirt. His single blue eye captivated Violetsky's own. She could perceive the misery and suffering glittering in the sphere.

Violetsky wished to believe him. But the memories came flashing back in her mind. He killed Adderpaw, he wounded Molesnake, *what more has he done?* She found herself overlooking everything Stormrunner once told her; *did he truly love her?*

"I'm so sorry darling," The white she-cat mumbled in melancholy. She embraced Violetsky, pulling her inwards. "The heart of evil never changes. He's slain prisoners before, he could do it again." After a few seconds of heartbreaking silence, the moon-toned she-cat shunned Stormrunner. "Restrain him in the cave. We don't want to see him."

As the brawny tom was drawn away, he roared one last time. "Violetsky!" Her name resounded in the shafts and slowly faded. The loneliness Violetsky sensed was torturous. She didn't lose a friend, she realized she never had one.

"You're so young and beautiful, I wanted to shield you from any danger." Eponine smiled sadly as she reclaimed her moss nest. The remaining cats of the meeting remained quiet, still processing what had occurred. "And he was a deadly tom. I needed to bring you to reality."

Violetsky understood she was attempting to justify her actions. Numerous thoughts seized her head she couldn't concentrate on listening. She naturally nodded. "I think-" The grizzled she-cat's voice cracked. "I think I loved him." Saying those few words out loud suggested a pressure had been hoisted from her chest.

"Well," Eponine clucked. "There are other, more genuine toms. For example, my son, Fangs." The rich-coated tom straightened up as he gazed at Violetsky. She couldn't muster the strength to speak. "Everything's going to get better. You're going to like living here, with us." She sprung to her paws, indicating Violetsky to do the same. "You need to rest. Fangs, show her the she-cat's room."

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The pair gradually ventured through the shafts. Violetsky sank behind the black tom, her head low to the ground and her tail lagging behind her. She felt completely drained and confined. She understood what the Rebellion was trying to do; earn her trust. Although, their deception wasn't difficult to detect.

In bitter resentment from the previous events, Violetsky finally rose to her voice. "I know what you're doing." She scowled under her breath. "And you're going to pay." A dangerous smile slipped onto her features as she made eye contact with Fangs.

The terror stretched across his face formed sour satisfaction in Violetsky. Her soul sought vengeance on the miscreants. They weren't going to get away so smoothly, plans of escape were already bubbling in her mind.

Fangs ruffled his silky black fur as if he was shaking away Violetsky's warning. "I don't know what you imply." He meowed firmly, turning a sharp corner down the never-ending tunnel. "We're deciding to support you and in that case, we had to discard your

dangerous confrere." At times, Fangs' unusual vocabulary puzzled Violetsky. *When did a cat learn such words?* Spotting Violetsky's perplexment, Fangs added, "You're in denial."

Violetsky entered the small den for sleeping she-cats. Anger spurred within as she watched a smirk form on Fangs face. "We'll see." She challenged, confronting the muscular tom. They both gaped at each other in unbroken silence, the romantic atmosphere between them was now replaced with piercing resentment.

"Have a good rest," Fangs taunted lightly, his features beaming. "Violetsky."

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

xv | sorrow's dreams

[image]

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

The darkness swirled endlessly around her. Dizziness infected her head so she could barely perceive a few paw-steps in front of her. The pale she-cat squinted, the atmosphere around her was strangely unfamiliar. It was black with a single light blaring down upon her. *Where am I?* The she-cat pondered.

As her vision slowly restored and vertigo pooled from her, Violetsky realized she wasn't located in the tunnels. *Was she dead?* As the thought formed in her head, someone called her name from afar. "Violetsky!"

She spun around, attempting to recognize the voice's owner. When she saw nothing, her hair began to tingle with apprehension. "Who's there?" She demanded. Violetsky's heart *thudded* hastily in her chest. Although she could comprehend the expanse, the scenery all seemed hazy.

Suddenly, the figure emerged from the shadows. He strode out gradually, placing one leg in front of the other. His ginger coat shimmered like a flame under the blaze of the white beam. He grinned as his old companion came into focus.

Violetsky's mouth dropped along with her pulse. Tears formed beneath the molly's orbs. The stillness in the air was captivating. She didn't believe the figure was truly him at first. "Adderpaw?" She whimpered. Violetsky bolted forward, wanting to embrace her distant friend. But as she went to encompass him, she fell through his skin. Adderpaw was a ghost.

"No time for such, my love." He purred gently, his fur recollecting from the break. "I've come here to warn you, are you listening?" He spoke with swiftness as if he were running out of time.

Violetsky recollected her position, blinking back the pain. "Yeah. I am." She swallowed the agony she once felt. *How lonely the world seemed without him.*

Adderpaw sensed his friend's sorrow. "You know I'm never gone." He whispered, drawing near the pale gray she-cat. "I will always be right here." He poked Violetsky's chest, where her heart was located. They both wept in silent sadness. How they wished to be in each other's worlds; together. "I know." Violetsky sobbed, her pale lavender eyes glittering with droplets.

"But I bring a warning," The ginger tabby proceeded. He tousled his star-painted pelt. "You are in great jeopardy, you have to leave." His information only left a puddle of confusion and Violetsky found herself drowning. But before asking, she let him continue. "You have to use what once destroyed you." But as the words tumbled from his trap, the ginger tom commenced fading.

"What do you mean?" Violetsky called but she was too late. Adderpaw disappeared as fast as he came. Hotness thundered throughout her body, Violetsky seemed sick to her stomach.

Faster than a twig snapping, she roused to her moss nest back in the tunnels. Her profuse fur was drenched in her own sweat. Violetsky sucked in a rasping breath; Adderpaw's warning was fresh in her head. *What did he mean? Use what destroyed you?*

But one thing was manifest, Violetsky needed assistance. And she knew the perfect cat to go to.

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xvi | love

[image]

aesthetic made by Silver_Marshmallow

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"We have to do something hasty, mother!" The rich black tom shouted in exasperation as his headstrong mother neglected to listen to him. "They're catching on. They're going to-" The tom was sharply intercepted.

"Stop cowering, you're not a sheep." The silver she-cat snapped. She raked her unsheathed claws into the moist dirt, rage turmoiling in her veins. "I've tried to reach WolfClan but they haven't responded to our arrangement. We'll have to wait for a few more moons." Eponine, the mother, scourged her tail. Her brilliant idea of trading the WolfClan escapees was crashing along her shoulders. She hated to admit, but her son was correct. It wouldn't be long until the pair figured out they were being deceived.

"Violetsky is already suspicious, she told me she understood what we were arranging." Fangs informed his mother. His fur spiked with terror; her threat seemed strangely frightening. He never thought someone with a sympathetic appearance could be so poisonous.

"Listen!" His mother spat, seizing her son with her crooked claws. "We have Violetsky wrapped around our paws, I'm not worried. We just have to keep up our act, is that clear?"

Fangs, with a quick reply, spat back, "Crystal."

Unfortunately for them, Violetsky was concealed behind the corner of the shaft, overhearing every comment between the two...

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She dashed through the dark tunnels. Unaware of the location her

paws were taking her, she twisted around unfamiliar corners. Violetsky had to reach the one tom who would help her and if getting lost was the consequence, she would risk it. She couldn't believe her ears from the overheard conversation between Eponine and Fangs. She was confident they were just dirty rogues working for Wolfstar.

As she thundered down the obscure shaft, she marked some familiarity about it. The pale gray molly bolted into an opening where she had been before. It was the large gathering room where the 'Rebellion' converges for Clan information. Violetsky slowed to a casual walk. She knew the cave, the place where they would retain hostages, was approaching. She reached the massive opening in the ground. Violetsky's lavender eyes touched upon her companion.

Her heart rippled at the sight of his peacefulness. His battered body was dozing lightly; his stomach lifting and falling in rhythm. Violetsky could watch him forever, but there was still a thorn in her heart from his dishonesty. "Stormrunner?" She mumbled, perching by the opening.

The bloodied tom's eye shifted open. His single optic fluttered as it adjusted to the lighting. "Who-" He paused as his gaze fell upon Violetsky. He found himself completely speechless around her. They spent seconds just gazing at each other; perhaps in relief or hope?

When Stormrunner didn't speak, Violetsky began, "I don't believe what they told but-" She paused, her eyes falling to her paws. The anguish flickered within her.

The brawny tom finished her statement with a long-drawn sigh. "It's true. I'm his son." Stormrunner didn't want to speak his name. It brought back numerous unpleasant memories, but he proceeded. "I didn't mean to lie," His voice fractured as tears formed beneath his orb. "I was so ashamed of my bloodline. I thought lying to you and myself would shield the guilt but it only made it worse." Stormrunner turned around so his back was facing Violetsky. He was always taught to never reveal his weaknesses. "I'm probably the last cat you want to see right now."

The couple of cats both found themselves weeping. Violetsky craved

to climb down with the tom and embrace him, but then they would both be imprisoned. "You were," Violetsky chuckled softly while clearing her tears with the surface of her forefoot. "But I realized that you aren't your father. You're so good." Her next words bequeathed her tongue so elegantly, she surprised herself. "And I love you for it."

Stormrunner too was surprised. His head gradually rotated around, so he was fronting the she-cat. Again, he found himself mute. After all this time, Violetsky returned his affection. He limped forward so he was as close to Violetsky as he could get. "I always thought you were more of a fighter, not a lover."

Violetsky smirked, "I can be both."

After still seconds of appreciating each other's company, sincerity coated over Violetsky's features. Adderpaw's words wouldn't leave her mind. She cleared her throat, "I need to tell you something." Seeing Stormrunner's serious face only scared her more. "I was visited by StarClan and they warned me of great danger."

Stormrunner tilted his head, studying her terrified appearance. "What does that mean?"

"I eavesdropped Fangs and Eponine. Stormrunner, they were planning to trade us back to WolfClan." Violetsky was just as concerned as Stormrunner. She furthered, "To escape, StarClan specifically said, *'use what destroyed you."*" She swung her head in feeble irritation. *What did destroy her?*

"Well," The gray tom prompted an answer. As if registering her mind, he proposed the same question, "What destroyed you?"

Violetsky gazed deeply into his single, bright blue orb as if the sphere held all of her solutions. She brought herself back many years ago when she was just a kit; what roused all the chaos: *fire.* A crisp shiver slithered down her back. "Fire," Violetsky stated simply as she stared into space. "It was what destroyed my home, killed my mother" She hesitated again, her sharp words stinging the air. "It made me a prisoner."

Stormrunner was startled. The horror molding within him was chilling. Although, he held the perfect plan. His father may have been evil, but he was unquestionably clever. He placed his paw along Violetsky's, comforting her. "We have to do this."

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xvii | embers and together

[image]

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The midnight air tousled their overgrown fur. The usual powerful zephyr was only a tempered breeze at this time. It was perfect for kindling a fire. The set of cats snuck through the shade; after Violetsky hauled Stormrunner from the cave, they were on a quest to locate the Two-Legs. Stormrunner had previously been instructed to light branches on fire using the two-leg torches they embarked on at night. However, Violetsky couldn't help but feel cruel. *Was this really what StarClan desired?*

"I-I don't have the strength to do this, Stormrunner." Violetsky strumbled as they neared the small barn of Two-Legs. She released the branch from her jowls, the long timber *tapping* against her paws. "Can't we run instead?"

The dark gray tom rocked his head. "We've been running for too long." The truth stung bitterly. Realizing he only emphasized the she-cat's melancholy feelings, he appended, "It grieves me too, you know? I vowed myself never to suit my father but I'm about to use his weapon for consumption."

Violetsky inhaled sharply as she focused on the branch beneath her paws. Despite all of her negative judgments, she elevated the branch. "Let's do this."

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The smoke tumbled into the midnight atmosphere. The brilliant stars were no longer visible as the blinding flames rose higher into the air. The embers fluttered like glittering fireflies. The pair of cats sat afar, watching as diaster shriveled the air. The stench of smoke scorched their fur. Ashes clung to them like sticky tree sap. Despite the torture they summoned, they were once again together.

They cuddled on the acclivity, attempting to seize their breath. Their eyes were sparkling, reflecting the towering flares.

Violetsky nuzzled into her friend's thick coat, his scent stinging her senses. "I can't believe what we just did." Neither could Stormrunner. The fire reopened old wounds and spurred new disasters. But at least they had each other. And they would be united on their next journey; to unearth the authentic Rebellion. In reality, they did exist and Violetsky required their support if there was any hope of defeating WolfClan.

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xviii | epilogue

[image]

aesthetic made by silentsea-

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The sweltering heat swamped their profuse furs. The sun blazed down on the wide, open fields. A gentle breeze wafted the air, rocking the long grasses and purple tufts of heather. The sunlight was blistering, never had a day been so hot. But despite the suffocating warmth, the expanse was marvelous. Violetsky was sure she had never seen anything so beautiful.

The pair of cats climbed leisurely over the tapering hillsides, exhaustion as prickly as the temperature. But something sparked within Violetsky that kept her moving. She wasn't going to surrender so easily. The real Rebellion was out there and she was determined to locate them.

"Violetsky, wait." Stormrunner's raspy tongue beckoned from behind the fast-moving she-cat. She halted, glancing over her shoulders. Stormrunner was terribly injured from the rogues and had difficulty exercising his hind legs. Dried blood crusted over his muscular frame, he was seriously struggling. Violetsky couldn't help but feel depraved, her companion seemed sick and she couldn't do anything to support him.

"I'm sorry," She spoke softly. The pale shaded she-cat walked beside the tom, letting him incline his burden on her. "We'll rest up here." She signaled with a flick of her tail towards a meager gradient with a single tree. The shade the tree supplied seemed frosty compared to the current heat.

The couple lounged under the cool shade, overlooking the rest of the extensive territory. Stormrunner grunted in agony as he attempted to peel the developing covering from his legs. The poor tom seemed so battered and broken. "Please, relax, my love."

Violetsky comforted while giving him a sympathetic glance. "We'll find help soon."

Before Stormrunner was given the chance to express, a *rustling* of grasses hindered him. Both of the cat's vision swung around as they predicted an open attack. Suddenly, a slim, tall dark ginger tom surfaced from behind the shrubbery. His striking green eyes hollowed into Violetsky's and for swift seconds she lost her breath. *Those eyes. I've seen them before.*

The russet tom grinned as he focused on Violetsky. "Hi," He kindly addressed while shifting closer to the cats. His scintillating eyes shimmered, "The Rebellion has been expecting visitors." As if he could sense the confusion developing within the cats, he promptly added, "Oh, I'm Rowanpaw."

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the end.

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The first book has finally come to an end! A **HUGE** thanks to everyone who read the story when I first started and has supported me on the way. Another **HUGE** thanks to everyone who helped me with graphics, I love having your art featured in my books.

So, you're probably hating me right now for that awful cliffhanger, BUT there will be a second story! I'm starting another series! I'm so thrilled. I don't have a time or date when the second book will be out because I'm going to take a rest for some days. But I will let you all know on my messages!

ALSO, I was thinking on opening an ask the Prisoner characters book where you can ask your favorite characters questions. Would you guys like to see that? Let me know!

Anyway, have an amazing day/night. You are all so wonderful and I feel so lucky to have you guys! Bye! <3

~aceisforeverloved (ace)

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